[Translation]

# *The Path of Freedom*

## *(Vimutti Magga)*

### *by Phra Pramote Pamotecho*



**PLEASE**
do not refer to the contents of this book for the purpose of debating or adulterate it in any *Dhamma* writing about a method of practice that is not awareness-oriented, simple and direct.

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# 1
# Let's Chat First

This Article is written to tell you, friends, about *vimutti magga* or the Path of Freedom. It is simple, pleasant and leading to realization of *Nibbāna*, which is right before your eyes. This path was sought by countless people, but never found until the Buddha discovered it. And we can easily follow the Buddha on this path if we study the three lessons taught by Him. Not long after following the Noble Path, we will have a feeling that *Nibbāna* is not beyond hope.

But before enumerating the Path of Freedom, I would like to invite all friends who are interested in *Dhamma* to change your own feeling from being a "practitioner" to being a "student" because the term "practice" is an illusion. It makes us feel that we should do something extraordinary in order to get something extraordinary whereas the term "study" denotes that what we should do is study of the truths and what we will get is knowledge. Study of the truths in Buddhism is study of the truths about what we call "our selves", namely Matter and Mind/body and mind. The way we learn to find out the truths is called, the "Threefold Training" (*sikkhāttaya*) or the study of three lessons, i.e. morality, mind or consciousness (*citta*) and wisdom (*paññā*), until we gain knowledge, i.e. insight into the Noble Truths (*ariya-sacca*), the core of Buddhism. The Noble Truths consist of **comprehension of the Noble Truth of Suffering (*dukkha*)**, i.e. realizing the truth about Mind and Matter/body and mind that they are subject to the Three Characteristics of Existence (*tilakkhaṇa*): impermanence (*anicca*), suffering (*dukkha*) and not-self (*anattā*). Once we clearly comprehend the Truth of Suffering, we will eliminate the Cause of Suffering (*samudaya*), i.e. craving (*taṇhā*) for making "our selves" happy and free from suffering; and instantly we will realize *nirodha* (the Extinction of Suffering) or *Nibbāna*. Comprehension of the Truth of Suffering (*dukkha)*, **elimination of the Cause of Suffering (*samudaya*)** and **realization of the Extinction of Suffering (*nirodha*)**, constitute **the Noble Path (*magga*).**

**Let's bear in mind that whoever comprehends the Noble Truths will indeed be free from suffering.**

# 2
# The Threefold Training

Insight into the Noble Truths (*ariya-sacca*), transcendental knowledge (*vijjā*) or the Right View (*sammādiṭṭhi*) is developed through study of three important lessons or the Threefold Training, which consists of training in morality, mentality and wisdom. It is generally called, the "training in morality, concentration and wisdom", but to be correct, it should be referred to as study of good conduct, mind and wisdom.

**Training in Morality** is training of **the mind** so that it **abides in its natural state** -- free from **evil and rough defilements** and prepared for further training;

**Training in Mentality** is training of **the mind** so that it **is prepared for development of wisdom** to the stage of comprehension of the Noble Truths. At that stage, consciousness must be moral consciousness (*mahākusala-citta*), associated with mental ability to intuitively see the truth of a condition, and also unprompted because it knows and remembers exactly that condition (of Mind and Matter/body and mind). This type of consciousness is devoid of hindrances, which are **moderate defilements**, and is firm, light, pliant, proficient and upright in mindfulness of an object of consciousness as it actually is.

**Training in Wisdom** is practice so that **consciousness will get intuitive insight into the Noble Truths.** Insight eradicates **subtle defilements**, i.e. fetters (*saṃyojana*), including ignorance (*avijjā*). Consciousness will be able to penetrate the Noble Truths only through practice for insight development (*vipassanā kammaṭṭhanā*). It is the process of discerning the truth of suffering or Matter and Mind/body and mind such that consciousness ceases clinging to Matter and Mind. Then, the mind will be permanently purified and liberated from all cankers (*āsava*) and the whole mass of suffering. This is the supreme goal of Buddhism.

Please note that:

(1) The Threefold Training is all about mental development. The first two lessons prepare the mind for insight development and the last, for enlightenment and liberation from the mass of suffering and defilements;

(2) The Threefold Training restrains, represses and overcomes rough, moderate and subtle defilements, respectively; and

(3) Although the subjects are different, the core of the Threefold Training is intrinsically one and the same. Only with steady mindfulness will the mind be able to study and pass these three lessons. In the absence of mindfulness alone, it will be impossible for the mind to pass any one of these lessons.

# 3
# Training in Morality

## 3.1 Purpose of Training in Morality

This training is for good bodily and verbal conduct, which will serve as a basis for further development of the Right Concentration (*sammāsamādhi*).

## 3.2 Kinds of Morality

There are several levels of morality, but we may easily divide it into three classes, as follows:

(1) Morality for good conduct;
(2) Morality for *Dhamma* practice; and
(3) Morality of the noble.

### 3.2.1 Morality for good conduct

These are abstinences of evils and misconduct by body and speech, e.g. the five precepts, the eight precepts, the ten precepts and the 227 precepts. This type of moral restraint arises from a firm resolution to refrain from bodily and verbal misconduct. Observers of these precepts will enjoy a peaceful living in society and save themselves from distraction. This level of morality is very necessary for one who practices *Dhamma*. At least they should determinedly abstain from five evils, e.g. killing and harming human beings and animals, harming and doing violence to property of others, harming or doing violence to the beloved and the highly valued of others, e.g. their spouses and children, lying, slandering, using harsh language, frivolous talking, and taking intoxicants, which causes heedlessness and mindlessness.

### 3.2.2 Morality for practicing *Dhamma*

This is sense-restraint (*indriyasaṃvara-sīla*), which is further developed from morality for good conduct. It arises from **mindfulness, which protects the mind from domination by defilements when the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind contact sense-objects.** For example, when one sees a wallet falling out of a man's pocket and craves for it, mindfulness will recollect the craving. As the result, craving cannot dominate the mind. The mind will remain calm and firm in its normal state. The mindful one will call the owner to pick it up. Both will be happy at the end. Alternatively, when one is

scolded and gets angry, if mindfulness recollects anger, the mind will not be enraged by anger. It will remain calm and firm as usual. There will be no quarrel, no exchange of words or assault, etc.

Sense-restraint is an effective instrument for developing mindfulness. Not only is it a moral rule, it is also conducive to insight development through mindfulness of consciousness in everyday life. For this reason, it is what a *Dhamma* practitioner should practice and observe in everyday life.

### 3.2.3 Morality of the noble (*ariya-puggala*)

Morality of the noble ones is further developed from sense-restraint. It is automatic restraint that a noble person need not intentionally observe. This is because noble persons from the stage of the Stream-Winners (*Sotāpanna*) to the stage of the Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*) will not be concerned to count their morality, precept by precept, but will have Dhamma, namely, mindfulness (*sati*), Right Concentration (*sammāsamādhi*), wisdom (*paññā*), as instruments for maintaining their minds in the normal state. They are not overcome by rough defilements to the extent that they might break the moral rules for good conduct. For the Holy Ones (*Arahat*), their minds are liberated from all cankers; there is no way that defilements will ever dominate their minds again. It is thus unnecessary for the noble to practice any *Dhamma* as an instrument for saving their minds from defilements.

## 3.3 Ways to Observe the Precepts

Ordinary people observe the precepts by repression and restraint from evils, but a *Dhamma* practitioner should observe the precepts with mindfulness and wisdom. When the eyes see a visible object, the ears hear a noise, the nose smells an odor, the tongue tastes a flavor, the body contacts any sense-object or consciousness is aware of an object of consciousness, if pleasure arises, mindfulness should recollect the feeling. If an aversion arises, mindfulness should likewise recollect it. And if it is indifferent, mindfulness should recollect the indifference as well. **Recollection is the function of mindfulness.** Whenever mindful, immoral consciousness that has not arisen will not arise, immoral consciousness in the present will disappear, moral consciousness that has not arisen will arise, and moral consciousness that has arisen will arise more easily. It would even be better if awareness of a condition is also associated with insight or clear comprehension – that such pleasure, aversion or indifference is impermanent or foreign. It is formed up from time to time by the mind itself and is uncontrollable. It arises, exists momentarily and then

vanishes. **Insight into this kind of truth is the function of wisdom.**

## 3.4 Results of Training in Morality

There are several results that are significant, as follows:

(1) One can live in society in peace, will not harm one's self and others, and will be respected in society;

(2) The mind abides in its normal state, is not overcome by rough defilements, and is ready for further development towards the Right Concentration and Wisdom;

(3) It is in itself a practice for insight development (*vipassanā*); and

(4) The mind will be strengthened and latent dispositions will gradually weaken because rough defilements are not satisfied; and so on.

In short, moral restraint can temporarily keep the mind away from defilements, but moral restraint with mindfulness and clear comprehension is in itself training for insight development because it will lead to extinction of defilements in the future.

# 4
# Training in Mentality

## 4.1 Purpose of Training in Mentality

The purpose of this training is to develop concentration and moral consciousness (*mahākusala-citta*) that is associated with wisdom and ready to further comprehend the truths of Matter and Mind.

## 4.2 What to Study about Consciousness

There are two points, i.e. what type of consciousness is moral vs. what kind is immoral; and what kind of mind is good for concentration practice (*samatha-bhāvanā*) and what kind is good for insight development (*vipassanā-bhāvanā*). If a *Dhamma* practitioner does not study these matters well, he or she may ignorantly develop immoral consciousness and misunderstands that he or she is practicing *Dhamma*. Likewise, he or she may mistakenly practice meditation (*samatha*) and believes that it is a practice for insight development (*vipassanā*).

## 4.3 Nature of Moral Consciousness

Moral consciousness must be associated with beautiful mental factors or ***sobhaṇa cetasika***. With such mental factors, consciousness is unblemished and righteous. There are 25 types of beautiful mental factors (the Higher Doctrine (*Abhidhamma*) refers to a mental factor (*cetasika*) as a mental state, like a state of consciousness). These beautiful mental factors can be divided into 4 types, as follows:

### 4.3.1 The beautiful mental factors that are common to all moral consciousness (*sobhaṇa-sādhāraṇa cetasika*) are of 19 types, namely:

(1) ***Saddhā***: faith, i.e. sensible belief which should conform to the teaching of Lord Buddha;
(2) ***Sati***: mindfulness, not noting as is widely translated at the later stage;
(3) ***Hiri***: moral shame of an evil;
(4) ***Ottappa***: moral dread of the outcome of an evil that will lead to suffering and trouble;
(5) ***Alobha***: non-greed or non-craving;
(6) ***Adosa***: non-hatred or loving-kindness;
(7) ***Tatramajjhattatā***: specific neutrality of mind to a condition through wisdom;

(8) ***Kāya passaddhi***: calmness of the mental factors, e.g. feeling;
(9) ***Citta-passaddhi***: tranquility of mind;
(10) ***Kāya-lahutā***: lightness of mental body;
(11) ***Citta-lahutā***: lightness of mind;
(12) ***Kāya-mudutā***: pliancy of mental body;
(13) ***Citta-mudutā***: pliancy of mind;
(14) ***Kāya-kammaññatā***: adaptability of mental body
(15) ***Citta-kammaññatā***: adaptability of mind;
(16) ***Kāya-pāguññatā:*** proficiency of mental body;
(17) ***Citta-pāguññatā***: proficiency of mind;
(18) ***Kāyujjukatā***: rectitude of mental body; and
(19) ***Cittujjukatā***: rectitude of mind.

After knowing these beautiful factors that must accompany moral consciousness, it will not be difficult to ascertain which state of consciousness is moral or immoral. For easy notice, it can be said that if any state of consciousness is mindless, it is absolutely immoral; and if any state of consciousness is heavy, tense, rigid, drowsy, stiff or dominated by a defilement, or attempts to intervene instead of being impassively mindful of an object of consciousness, then it is obviously immoral.

**4.3.2 The beautiful factors that restrain bodily and verbal misconduct (*virati-cetasika*)** are the three beautiful factors that accompany certain states of consciousness, namely:

(1) **Right Speech** (*sammā-vācā*): abstention from four kinds of verbal misconduct, i.e. from false speech, malicious speech, harsh speech and vain talk;

(2) **Right Action** (*sammā-kammanta*): abstention from three kinds of bodily misconduct, i.e. killing and harming human beings and animals, infringing on property of others and sexual misconduct; and

(3) **Right Livelihood** (*sammā-ājīva*): abstention from wrong livelihood that involves wrong speech and wrong actions.

**4.3.3 The beautiful factors in boundless states (*appamaññā-cetasika*)** are the beautiful factors that extend boundless loving-kindness to all animals. These factors are of 4 types, namely:

(1) ***Mettā*:** loving-kindness to others;
(2) ***Karuṇā*:** compassion for others to end their suffering;
(3) ***Muditā***: sympathetic joy when others are happy; and

(4) ***Upekkhā***: indifference when others suffer and one cannot help. However, the Higher Doctrine (*Abhidhamma*) classifies only two kinds of *cetasika* as *appamaññā-cetasika*: *karuṇā* and *muditā* because *karuṇā* (loving-kindness) is *adosa* (non-hatred) and *upekkhā* (indifference) is *tatramajjhattatā* i.e. equanimity of mind to conditions, as is described above under the heading of beautiful factors that are common to all moral consciousness.

**4.3.4 Realization of the Four Noble Truths (*paññindriya cetasika*)** or ***amoha*** or insight into the Four Noble Truths, namely:

(1) **Comprehension of Suffering**: Knowledge that Matter and Mind/the five aggregates/body and mind are a whole mass of suffering and an origin of suffering and that the *function concerning suffering* is to discern the truth that Mind and Matter have the Three Characteristics;

(2) **Comprehension of the Cause of Suffering**: Knowledge that craving or mental striving causes suffering and that the function concerning the *cause of suffering* is to eradicate it;

(3) **Comprehension of the Cessation of Suffering**: Knowledge of the state of *extinction of craving and suffering* and knowledge that the *function concerning cessation* is to realize it; and

(4) **Comprehension of the Path:** Knowledge of **the Eightfold Path to Cessation** and knowledge that the *function concerning the path* is to practice or develop it, which is development of the right mindfulness on the four foundations of mindfulness (*satipaṭṭhāna*) in accordance with the principles of insight development.

## 4.4 Nature of Immoral Consciousness

Immoral consciousness is rooted in evils or associated with immoral factors or ***akusala cetasika***, which are of 14 types/states and are classified into 5 classes; as follows:

**4.4.1 Delusion (*moha*) class:** These mental factors can accompany all of the twelve types of immoral consciousness. They are also referred to as ***sabbā-kusalasādhāraṇā cetasika*** or immoral mental factors that are common to all immoral consciousness. They are divided into four types/states, as follows: -

(1) ***Moha***: delusion or nature that conceals the truth of an object of consciousness such that the consciousness cannot conceive the object as it actually is;
(2) ***Ahirika***: shamelessness of bodily, verbal and mental misconduct;
(3) ***Anottappa***: fearlessness of the outcome of evils; and
(4) ***Uddhacca***: restlessness or the natural state in which the mind cannot firmly concentrate on a mind-object.

Meanwhile, since the mental factors in this class are of four types, they are referred to as "***mocatuka cetasika***."

**4.4.2 Greed** (*lobha*) **class**: These mental factors can accompany all of the eight types of immoral consciousness rooted in greed: They are of three types/states, as follows:

(1) ***Lobha***: greed and covetousness of sense-objects – visible objects, sound, odor, taste, tangible objects and mind-objects;
(2) ***Diṭṭhi***: misbelief; and
(3) ***Māna***: conceit.

Meanwhile, since this is of three types, it is called, the class of ***lotika cetasika.***

**4.4.3 Hatred (*dosa*) class:** These mental factors can accompany two types of consciousness rooted in hatred. They are of four types/states, as follows:

(1) ***Dosa***: hatred or anger;
(2) ***Issā***: envy of the qualifications or merits of another person or jealousy;
(3) ***Macchariya***: stinginess on one's own property and merits or meanness; and
(4) ***Kukkucca***: remorse or distress arising from a sense of guilt for past wrongs, worry and anxiety about virtue that has not been done.

Meanwhile, as this class is of four types, it is called, the class of ***docatuka cetasika.***

**4.4.4 Sloth and torpor (*thīna-middha*) class:** These mental factors associate or accompany five types of immoral consciousness that are prompted (*sasankhārikam*) (consisting of four types of consciousness rooted in greed and one type of consciousness rooted in hatred, the details of which will not be enumerated here because it will make this Article too complex and difficult

for *Dhamma* practitioners who have never studied the Higher Doctrine (*Abhidhamma*) before). This class is of two types/states of consciousness, as follows:

(1) ***Thīna***: Sloth or nature that depresses or discourages the mind; and

(2) ***Middha***: Torpor or nature that causes drowsiness or idleness to conceive an object of consciousness. Meanwhile, since this class is of 2 types, they are called, ***thiduka cetasika.***

**4.4.5 Doubt (*vicikicchā*) class**: Indecision and uncertainty about an object of consciousness is a mental factor that accompanies only consciousness rooted in doubt. Doubt here only refers to immoral doubt, i.e. a skeptical doubt about the virtues of the Triple Gem, doubts about the Aggregates, the Spheres and the Elements in the past, present and future, and doubts about the Dependent Origination. Other doubts, such as, doubts about technical matters or a doubt about a street name, are not regarded as immoral doubts, but are false doubts or *paṭirūpaka-vicikicchā*.

If consciousness of a *Dhamma* practitioner is associated with only one of these mental factors, then it is regarded as immoral. An immoral mental factor that accompanies every immoral consciousness, which we should study well, is **delusion (*moha*)**, which by nature is ignorance of the truth of an object of consciousness. Particularly for one who practices insight meditation, if through ignorance consciousness is distracted from Matter and Mind to a conventional mind-object or a thought, then it is abstracted. Thus, we should know **abstractedness** well because it is a foe that comes to mind most often for insight practitioners. In any event, it is true that abstraction may lead to thoughts about a subject matter that is moral, but that would be only a worldly moral or at best a meditation practice for concentration, not for insight development. Insight development requires consciousness to be mindfulness of Matter and Mind as they truly are. **The wording "mindfulness of Matter and Mind as they truly are" is intrinsically non-delusion (*amoha*) or wisdom (*paññā*).**

## 4.5 Summary

In sum, *Dhamma* practitioners should know the states of moral consciousness and immoral consciousness well. Otherwise, they may ignorantly and mistakenly develop immoral consciousness in the belief

that that they are practicing *Dhamma* for insight development. Following are examples:

(1) If mindful of any object, consciousness becomes heavy, tense, stiff or drowsy, consciousness at that moment is certainly immoral;

(2) If thinking about an unwholesome matter, the consciousness is obviously immoral;

(3) If thinking about a wholesome matter, e.g. thinking of helping others, thinking of repeating "*Buddho*" as the word of exercise, thinking of noting movements of the abdomen, thinking of the Triple Gem, contemplating that this body is impure/loathsome, thinking of in-and-out breathing, reflecting that one is not a self, only Matter and Mind, which are impermanent, suffering and not-self, then, consciousness at that moment is ordinary moral consciousness. Thus, it is not yet a practice for insight development; and

(4) If unintentionally consciousness is mindful of the present condition as it really is, the consciousness will be light, pliant, adaptable, proficient, upright, mindful, awaken, cheerful, peaceful, clean and bright. The consciousness at that moment is moral and applicable at the stage of insight development (For further details, see Clause 4.6).

## 4.6 Nature of Consciousness for Concentration Practice and Consciousness for Insight Development

We have discussed the nature of both moral consciousness and immoral consciousness. Next, we should study nature of the consciousness that should be developed for concentration practice and nature of the consciousness that should be developed for insight development because if we apply consciousness for concentration meditation to insight development, our practice will not be successful as contemplated. Under this heading, the subject matters that one should study and understand are as follows:

**4.6.1 Quality Consciousness**: The Higher Doctrine (*Abhidhamma*) states that consciousness for concentration practice and consciousness for insight meditation must be *mahākusala-citta*, *ñaṇasampayuttam,* namely, moral consciousness associated with knowledge. The moral consciousness is of 4 types, namely:

(1) Consciousness accompanied by joy, associated with knowledge and unprompted (*asankhārikam*)[1];

(2) Consciousness accompanied by joy, associated with knowledge, but prompted (*sasankhārikam*)[2];

(3) Consciousness, accompanied by indifference, associated with knowledge and unprompted (*asankhārikam*)[3]; and

(4) Consciousness accompanied by indifference, associated with knowledge, but prompted (*sasankhārikam*)[4.]

**4.6.2 Differences between concentration development and insight development:** Although the Scriptures (*Pariyatti Dhamma*) consider consciousness for concentration practice and consciousness for insight practice to be of the same kind, the differences in other factors are distinguished, as follows:

(1) Concentration development applies a conventional (*paññatti*) object whereas insight development applies an ultimate (*paramattha*) object; and

(2) Concentration development is practiced through absorption or object-scrutinizing *jhāna*, which is called *ārammanupanijjhāna*, whereas insight development is practiced through discernment of the Three Characteristics of Matter and Mind, which is called *lakkhanupanijhāna*.

**4.6.3 Opinions of the author:** I do agree with the Scriptures (*Pariyatti Dhamma*), but in my opinion, the Scriptures resemble a map. There are miscellaneous details that one will experience during practice. Some other points that my fellow practitioners should take into consideration are as follows:

**4.6.3.1 Consciousness (*citta*):** My opinions are as follows:

(1) Consciousness for insight development must be moral consciousness that has all constituents under Clause 4.3.1. For your easy notice, if during practice for insight development, consciousness becomes stressed, tense, rigid, drowsy or dull, or tries to interfere with the object of consciousness, it

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[1] *somanassa-sahagatam ñāṇasampayuttam sasankhārikam ekam*
[2] s*omanassa-sahagatam ñāṇasampayuttam sasankhārikam ekam*
[3] *upekkhā-sahagatam ñāṇasampayuttam asankhārikam ekam*
[4] *upekkhā-sahagatam ñāṇasampayuttam sasankhārikam ekam*

indicates that the consciousness is immoral and no longer applicable to insight development; and

(2) Consciousness that is applicable to insight development must be very powerful. Mindfulness must arise without prompting (*asankhārikam*) at all. The cause of mindfulness is *thira-saññā,* i.e. a strong perception of a condition (Matter and Mind), not the repeating of a word of exercise, mental noting, gazing or forcing. On the other hand, consciousness applicable to concentration practice is prompted (*sasankhārikam*) because concentration practice requires willful noting, gazing and sustaining of consciousness by contemplation of a single object continuously.

**4.6.3.2 Object of consciousness** (*ārammaṇa*): My opinions are as follows:

(1) **There are a variety of objects for concentration practice**. It can be anything, ranging from:

(a) **a conventional object of consciousness**, e.g. repeating the word *"Buddho"* at the preliminary stage of absorption (*parikamma*), mental noting of the rising and falling movements of the abdomen, contemplation of the virtues of the Buddha, contemplation of the virtues of the Doctrine, contemplation of the virtues of the Order, contemplation of one's past charity and morality, contemplation of impurity and loathsomeness of the body, etc.;

(b) **Matter and Mind as an object of consciousness**: Mindfulness of Matter and Mind, if not accompanied by insight into the Three Characteristics of Existence, is only an object-scrutinizing practice or a concentration practice (*samatha*). Therefore, *Dhamma* practitioners should not heedlessly believe that when consciousness is mindful of Matter and Mind, it must always be a practice for insight development; and

(c) ***Nibbāna* as an object of consciousness**: *Nibbāna* can be applied as an object of consciousness at the stage of attainment of the Extinction of Suffering (*saññā-vedayita-nirodha* or *nirodha samāpatti*) by the Non-returners (*Anāgāmi*) and the

Holy Ones (*Arahat*) who are skillful in the Absorptions of the Formless Sphere (*arupajhāna*).

(2) **Objects of consciousness for insight development are limited to only Matter and Mind**. This is to eradicate the wrong view (*micchā-diṭṭhi*) and attachment to Matter and Mind as an animal, a human being, an ego, oneself or others. Conventional objects (*paññatti-ārammaṇa*) are not applicable because they are not real things. Nor can one contemplate *Nibbāna* as an object of consciousness because *Nibbāna* is neither regular consciousness nor one's own Matter and Mind/body and mind.

**4.6.3.3 Concentration and comprehension of the nature of an object of consciousness:** I think in meditation practice and insight development practice, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom perform different functions. Concentration causes object-scrutinizing in meditation practice (*samatha*) and causes insight into the characteristics of an object of consciousness in insight development practice (*vipassanā*).

**4.6.3.3.1 Mindfulness**

(1) In concentration meditation (*samatha*), mindfulness must **continuously concentrate on one object of consciousness by way of contemplating, noting or gazing such that consciousness will comfortably move to adhere to the object of consciousness**; provided that, the object of consciousness is fit for one's temperament. Consciousness should be relaxed. If consciousness is stressed, it shows that the object of consciousness is not fit for one's temperament. Thus, consciousness will not be tranquil. When consciousness continuously and comfortably contemplates a single object, consciousness will calm down by itself.

(2) In practice for insight development (*vipassanā*), consciousness must be **impassively mindful of the present Matter and Mind**. One should be mindful of Matter and Mind as an outsider, like a man watching a football game from the side of a football field or watching a performance in front of the stage; and **mindfulness must be**

**unprompted** (*asankhārikam*), unintentional or effortless. Mindfulness can arise naturally because it has a strong perception of the condition of Matter and Mind. It does not arise from gazing intently or mental noting as is the case of meditation practice (*samatha*).

### 4.6.3.3.2 Concentration

(1) Concentration in meditation practice is the state in which consciousness firmly concentrates on an object of consciousness. It is cohering to, absorbed in and not deviated from that one object of consciousness. For example, when mindful of breathing, consciousness will concentrate on breathing. When mindful of movements of the abdomen, it will cling to the abdomen. When mindful of a hand or foot, then, it will cling to the hand or foot. When mindful of feeling, it will cling to feeling. When mindful of consciousness, it will cling to the emptiness of consciousness; and when repeating a word of exercise at the preparatory stage of absorption, it will cling to the repeated word.

(2) Concentration in insight practice is the state in which consciousness firmly concentrates on mindfulness of Matter and Mind. Consciousness and an object of consciousness are independent and separate, as if there were a space between them. Consciousness resembles a man watching a stage performance or watching a football game from the side of a field, or a man on the bank of a river seeing an object flowing down the stream. Consciousness will be impassively mindful of Matter and Mind and will gain insight into the characteristics of the present Matter and Mind. That is to say, when seeing a visible object, it is only "seeing of Matter", and it is consciousness that sees it and separates from it. When mindful of feeling, then it is simply "feeling" and it is consciousness that feels it and separates from it. When mindful of consciousness, then it is simply "consciousness", and another consciousness recollects the preceding consciousness that vanished just a moment before. And when mindful of a condition, consciousness comprehends that it is simply a condition, and

consciousness that is mindful of the condition is separate from the condition.

#### 4.6.3.3.3 Wisdom

(1) Wisdom resulting from concentration practice has the following important characteristics:

(a) It **arises from thinking or involves thinking or *cintāmayapaññā*.** Although the thought is a truth, it is only **a conventional truth**. For example, the Buddha is really beneficent, but this knowledge comes to mind through contemplation and reflection. After reflection, consciousness is tranquil. It is true that the body is impure/loathsome, but we gain this knowledge from time to time by contemplation and reflection. After reflection, the mind is tranquil. Death is a truth, but we know it from time to time by contemplation and reflection. This life, this body and this mind truly have the Three Characteristics, but we comprehend it by thinking and comparing Matter and Mind in the past to Matter and Mind in the present and noting that they are different (this kind of comprehension is called *sammasana ñāṇa*). After reflection, the mind is tranquil; and

(b) It is **wisdom through which consciousness wisely and expertly applies certain strategies to repress hindrances** (*nīvaraṇa*), which are adversary to tranquility of mind. For example, when a craving for sensual pleasure arises, consciousness will wisely contemplate impurity of the body to temporarily repress it. When an ill will comes to mind, it will wisely contemplate goodwill or loving-kindness (*mettā*) to temporarily repress the ill will. When consciousness is distracted, it will wisely practice mindfulness of breathing to temporarily repress distraction.

(2) Wisdom through mental development has the following important characteristics:

(a) It is **developed through awareness** or **mindfulness** or ***bhāvanāmayapaññā***, which does not involve thinking. Insight arises from

mindfulness of a condition, i.e. Matter and Mind at the present moment, again and again, with the **Right Concentration** (*sammāsamādhi*) (or concentration of the consciousness that is impassively mindful of an object of consciousness, i.e. Matter and Mind); and

(b) It is **insight into the truth of Matter and Mind/body and mind that they have the Three Characteristics of Existence** such that consciousness becomes neutral to Matter and Mind, relinquishes them, and finally realizes *Nibbāna*, the extinction of suffering.

## 4.7 Methods of Mentality Study (*citta*)

The purpose of mentality study is to study the nature of immoral or moral consciousness and consciousness fit for concentration development (*samatha*) or insight development (*vipassanā*). There are three methods of study:

### 4.7.1 Mentality study from the Scriptures (*Pariyatti Dhamma*):

The Scriptures (*Pariyatti Dhamma*) briefly distinguishes consciousness into 89 types and comprehensively distinguishes it into 121 types. These 89/121 types of consciousness may be further classified by various means, as follows:

(1) *By origin*, into 4 types, namely, moral consciousness, immoral consciousness, resultant consciousness and functional consciousness;

(2) *By sphere*, into 4 types, namely, sense-sphere, form-sphere, formless-sphere and supermundane consciousness;

(3) *By goodness*, into 2 types, namely, beautiful consciousness (*sobhaṇa citta*); and unbeautiful consciousness (*asobhaṇa citta*) or other types of consciousness not included in beautiful consciousness;

(4) *By mundane*, into 2 types: supramundane or worldly consciousness, and supermundane or consciousness beyond these worlds;

(5) *By root*, into 2 types: rooted consciousness (*sahetuka citta*), which is composed of six roots, i.e. greed, hatred,

delusion, non-greed, non-hatred and non-delusion[5] and rootless consciousness (*ahetuka citta*) or consciousness not composed of these six roots;

(6) *By feeling,* into 5 types: consciousness accompanied by bodily pleasure, physical pain, joy, grief and indifference. This subject matter is too long to enumerate in this Article, but in short, if one wants to understand mentality thoroughly, his/her mentality study from the Scriptures should be the study of consciousness (*citta*), its functions (*viññāṇa-kicca*) and process (*cittavīthi*).

**4.7.2 Mentality study through practice:** Practitioners who do not study mentality from the Scriptures (*Pariyatti Dhamma*) may study consciousness through practice. There are two types of practice, as follows:

4.7.2.1 **Mentality study of one taking tranquility as his vehicle (*samatha-yanikā*)**

One of lustful temperament, i.e. one who is fond of pleasure, comfort, beauty and tranquility, should develop wisdom through mindfulness of the body (*kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*) and mindfulness of feeling (*vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*). However, before practice on these two foundations of mindfulness, one should study mentality by meditation first so that consciousness will be steadfast, eminent, mindful, awaken, cheerful and one-pointed (*ekaggatā*). Only then will consciousness be able to perceive the body and feeling as they truly are -- that they have the Three Characteristics of Existence. To practice concentration, one should choose an object that fits with one's temperament. One proficient in contemplation of breathing should contemplate breathing. One proficient in repeating *Buddho* should repeat *Buddho.* One proficient in movement of a hand should make and feel the movement. One proficient in mindfulness of four bodily postures (*iriyā-patha*) should develop mindfulness of the four bodily postures. And one proficient in observing movements of the abdomen should observe the rising and falling movements. However, there is a secret technique. At the moment consciousness is mindful of the chosen object of consciousness, it must be light, relaxed and happy because happiness is the proximate cause of

[5] *lobha, dosa, moha, alobha, adosa and amoha*

concentration. Be mindful of that object of consciousness continuously without repressing or oppressing it such that with no attempt consciousness coheres to the object of consciousness. Then, wisely observe it a little that all such objects of mindfulness are known things and it is consciousness that knows and sees them. At this point, one will feel that the body is breathing, but the mind is looking at the breathing body. One consciousness repeats *Buddho*, and another consciousness recollects it. The hand moves, but the mind sees the movement. The body is in different postures, but the mind sees the postures. The abdomen within the body rises and falls, but the mind sees the movements of the abdomen.

With more and more practice, finally, the mind will be concentrated and constantly mindful of knowing/seeing. This is a simple way to study mentality through practice for a *samatha-yanikā*. However, if one wants to study mentality completely and thoroughly, one needs to apply a certain foundation of mindfulness that can elevate the mind to the second absorption (*jhāna*) (by virtue of the *Sutta*) or the third absorption (by virtue of the *Abhidhamma*), e.g. contemplation of breathing (*anāpānasati*). In that absorption, the key constituent is *ekaggatā* or one-pointedness. When the mind retreats from the absorption, one-pointedness or the knowing consciousness will continue to be firm for a while. Thus, it should be applied to mindfulness practice in order to develop a vision of truth (*ñāṇadassana*) or insight (*paññā*) through mindfulness of the body or feeling at the present moment. When one-pointedness fades, one should resume the concentration practice. This is a method of alternate practice that concentration leads wisdom.

#### 4.7.2.2 Mentality study for one taking insight as his vehicle (*vipassanā-yanikā*)

One of speculative temperament is one who is fond of speculation, imagination, criticism, fact-finding or one who is idealistic. One of this temperament should develop insight through contemplation of mind (*cittanupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*) and contemplation of mind-objects (*dhammānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*). However, to develop insight on both foundations of mindfulness, one should study consciousness by observing it directly. This method is easy. One should diligently observe changes of one's own feelings – that sometimes one is happy, sometimes unhappy, and sometimes indifferent.

Sometimes, one is cheerful and other times sad. Sometimes consciousness is heavy, sometimes light. Sometimes it is greedy, sometime greedless. Sometimes it is angry, sometimes not. Sometimes it is abstracted/mindless; other times it is mindful. Sometimes consciousness is distracted, sometimes depressed. Sometimes, consciousness arises at the eye(s), sometimes at the ear(s), sometimes in the mind for mental formation. Sometimes it is mindless; and other times it is gazing. Do observe it constantly. Then, one will understand one's own mind soon. The mind may switch to concentration from time to time. This is a method that wisdom leads concentration.

4.7.2 **Mentality study through practice and comparison to the Scriptures (*Pariyatti Dhamma*)**: This is probably the best method, beginning from tranquilization in accordance with Clause 4.7.2.1 or constant observation of feeling in accordance with Clause 4.7.2.2, and reading the subject of mentality study in this Article. Then, one will gain more extensive and comprehensive knowledge and comprehension of one's own mind; and the next stage of insight practice will be easy.

## 4.8 Results of Mentality Study

The important results are:

(1) One will not ignorantly develop immoral consciousness with craving and with intention to practice *Dhamma*;

(2) One will not mistakenly practice meditation with a misunderstanding that it is practice for insight development;

(3) One will not be deluded into believing that one has realized the Path, the Fruition and *Nibbāna* simply because one has experienced something extraordinary, whether physically or mentally;

(4) One will be able to calm one's mind more easily and correctly when appropriate; whereas a number of *Dhamma* practitioners tend to ignorantly train their minds to feel drowsy or distracted. Some take pleasure in sending mind out to know some external things or in forming unusual mental images. Such practices are useless both in terms of tranquilization of the mind for strength and in terms of preparation of the mind for insight development; and

(5) One can develop quality consciousness for further insight development or *vipassanā kaṃṃatthāna,* i.e. moral consciousness associated with knowledge and unprompted.

In conclusion, when we know the nature of immoral consciousness and moral consciousness, including the nature of consciousness for concentration and insight development, if any type of consciousness arises, mindfulness will arise to recollect it automatically. If at that moment consciousness is immoral, it will vanish immediately and will automatically be replaced by moral consciousness (*mahakusala-citta*). It is this new consciousness that is rightly mindful (*sammāsati*), momentarily concentrated (or *khaṇikasamādhi*), and ready for further insight development, i.e. mindfulness of Matter and Mind as they truly are. On the contrary, if at that moment, consciousness is so distracted and wavering that it cannot be mindful of Matter and Mind, one should tranquilize it by meditation until it is firm, mindful, awaken and cheerful. Then, it will regain enough strength to resume mindfulness of Matter and Mind for further insight development. However, if the tranquilized mind is enchanted with tranquility such that it feels lazy to resume mindfulness of Matter and Mind, consciousness should comprehend that it is already enchanted with tranquility. Then, consciousness will detach itself from clinging to tranquility, and further develop insight. On the other hand, if it still clings to tranquility, one should apply a tactic to detach it from tranquility in order to perceive other objects of consciousness. Then, clinging to tranquility will vanish.

# 5
# Training in Wisdom

## 5.1 Purpose of Training in Wisdom

To learn how to use quality consciousness to study and comprehend the truths of Matter and Mind until it can relinquish Matter and Mind and realize *Nibbāna*, which is a state of oblivion to Matter and Mind, all defilements and craving.

## 5.2 Types of Wisdom

### 5.2.1 **Wisdom classified by quality of knowledge:** divided into 2 types, namely:

(1) Mundane wisdom or ***lokiya-paññā*** is knowledge and wisdom for living in this world with minimal suffering or for temporary restraint from suffering or temporary suppression of defilements and craving. For example, a person with mundane wisdom will wisely give alms, observe the precepts and practice meditation for peace of mind, etc.; and

(2) Supermundane wisdom or ***lokuttara-paññā*** is knowledge and comprehension of the Noble Truths, thereby causing the mind to detach itself from Matter and Mind/body and mind and realize *Nibbāna*, which is truly bliss of emancipation.

### 5.2.2 **Wisdom classified by origin:** divided into 3 types, namely:

(1) ***Sutamayapaññā*** or wisdom acquired by acceptance of a transfer of knowledge from other persons, e.g. wisdom resulting from reading textbooks and listening to teachings of one's parents and teachers, etc.

(2) ***Cintamayapaññā*** or wisdom acquired by contemplation, reflection or reasoning; and

(3) ***Bhavanamayapaññā*** or wisdom acquired by development of mindfulness. This kind of wisdom is further divided into 2 types, namely, wisdom resulting from *samatha kammaṭṭhanā* or meditation, which is knowledge and wisdom of developing the mind towards tranquility, and *vipassanā paññā,* i.e. penetration of truths of Matter and Mind through constant mindfulness of Matter and Mind.

## 5.3 <u>Method to Acquire Wisdom</u>

The wisdom that is of essence in this Article is *vipassanā paññā* (wisdom through insight development), which will lead to supermundane wisdom. There are some points that one should understand, as follows:

### 5.3.1 Cause of wisdom

Although the Higher Doctrine (*Abhidhamma*) states that the Right Concentration (*sammāsamādhi*) causes wisdom, the Right Concentration of mind is also subject to several other factors, particularly the Right Mindfulness (*sammāsati*). An interesting point is why the Higher Doctrine does not state that mindfulness is the proximate cause of wisdom. The reason is that mindfulness alone is not enough for practice for insight development (*vipassanā kammaṭṭhāna*), but is enough for meditation (*samatha kammaṭṭhāna*). If meditation is correctly exercised, the Right Concentration will arise. If incorrectly exercised, it may result in wrong concentration associated with greed and delusion.

For one practicing concentration (*samatha-yanikā*), when meditation is exercised to the stage that consciousness is concentrated, particularly from the second absorption (*jhāna*) and above, i.e. the state in which consciousness is free from conception (*vitakka*) and deliberation (*vicāra*) of the object of consciousness and is one-pointed (*ekaggatā*) (which is truly the Right Concentration), after consciousness retreats from the absorption (*jhāna*), the influence of one-pointedness will not immediately vanish, but will result in firm consciousness. Firm consciousness will know and see all objects of consciousness neutrally and continuously for a period of time. For example, consciousness will mindfully observe the vanishing of the absorption (*jhāna*) that happened in a moment, and observe the rising of another condition, say, distraction. At that moment, consciousness is firm and neutral. Mindfulness will impassively notice changes of all conditions until it acquires insight, i.e. comprehension of the true nature of all conditions that they are impermanent, suffering or not-self.

For one practicing insight development (*vipassanā-yanikā*), whenever consciousness is unintentionally mindful of the present condition of Matter and Mind, it will be momentarily firm and impassively mindful of the condition. When the condition is not gazed at, noted mentally or repressed, it will reveal the truth, i.e. the Three Characteristics of Existence, to the mind.

The comprehension of this truth that Matter and Mind have the Three Characteristics of Existence is called insight.

### 5.3.2 Method of training in mindfulness of Matter

(1) Mindfulness of Matter will be of quality (i.e. able to comprehend the Three Characteristics easily and clearly) only when consciousness is one-pointed with the Right Concentration, firm when mindful of an object of consciousness, or separate from an object of consciousness and impassively from and mindful of an object of consciousness gently and neutrally. If consciousness is not concentrated, but flows into, gazes at or clings to an object of consciousness, it will not be able to perceive the Three Characteristics of Matter clearly. It will only be gazing at Matter such that consciousness and/or Matter becomes fixed and does not show the Three Characteristics.

(2) Not only must one refrain from gazing, but one must also avoid applying thoughts about Matter to the cognition process. For example, one need not think that this walking Matter is Matter, not a self, that this Matter, which is sitting, is impure/loathsome or that sooner or later this lying Matter will die, etc. because thoughts conceal realities. When a thought comes to mind, consciousness will get away from mindfulness of "Matter", which is an ultimate truth, and conceive the "thought about Matter", which is a conventional truth. Consequently, consciousness at that moment cannot develop insight at all.

(3) One must be mindful of Matter that exists at the present moment and must disregard Matter in the past when overcome by perception. Nor should one think of Matter in the future when overcome by mental formation.

(4) Mindfulness of Matter must unintentionally and automatically arise by reason of having a strong perception of the condition of that Matter.

(5) After bewaring of any Matter, if joy or aversion arises, consciousness should recollect that feeling because the first Matter already disappeared. Joy or aversion becomes an object of consciousness at the present moment. When the biased feeling vanishes, mindfulness may continue to observe the Matter or may pay attention to other objects of consciousness. In the case that mindfulness of the biased feeling does not arise, consciousness will not remain neutral and may abstractedly think about the Matter or other matters, or may ignorantly intervene and adapt the Matter or the Mind that accompanies the Matter, which are contrary to the principle of

insight development, i.e. to recollect Matter and Mind as they truly are.

(6) When consciousness is firm and neutral and mindfulness of the present Matter is impassive and unintentional, it will get an intuitive insight in to the truth that Matter is transient, i.e. moving and changing all the time, is oppressed by suffering all the time, and is only a composition of elements or part of the world, not an animal, a human being or a self at all.

### 5.3.3 Method of training in mindfulness of Mind

(1) Mindfulness of Mind will be of quality, i.e. able to comprehend the Three Characteristics easily and clearly, only when mindfulness unintentionally recollects the Mind that disappeared just a moment before. Therefore, do not try to keep alert before recollection of Mind arises. Additionally, do not grasp at the present object of consciousness because mindfulness of Mind is recollection of the preceding object of consciousness. That is to say, an object of consciousness arises first. Then, mindfulness recollects the object of consciousness a moment later. As consciousness has a strong perception of the object of consciousness, mindfulness can recollect the object automatically when the object arises.

(2) When an object of consciousness arises and mindfulness recollects it, do not plunge into it to gaze at it with a will to comprehend it clearly. Simply be mindful of it with firm consciousness and impassiveness. Be mindful with neutrality or as an outsider who has no gain or loss in it. If consciousness plunges into the object of consciousness, the object of consciousness may flee by moving inwards deeply or may hold still, but not disappear. In that situation, consciousness will not be able to comprehend that Mind also has the Three Characteristics. For example, seeing that consciousness never disappears, it will not comprehend that Mind is impermanent. In other cases, consciousness may, on seeing that Mind disappears, misunderstand that Mind is a self because it can cease Mind by gazing at Mind.

(3) On recollecting any Mind, if pleasure or displeasure arises, mindfulness should recollect that feeling because the first Mind, which is the first recollected object of consciousness, already disappeared; and pleasure or displeasure, which is new Mind, is the present object of consciousness. If mindfulness fails to recollect pleasure or displeasure, consciousness will not remain neutral and will ignorantly follow the object of consciousness. Otherwise, it may ignorantly intervene or adapt the Mind, which

is contrary to the principle of insight development that consciousness should be mindful of Matter and Mind as they truly are.

(4) When consciousness is neutral and unintentionally mindful of an object of consciousness that vanished just a moment before, insight will instantly flash through the mind that Mind rises and falls, changes from moment to moment, and is uncontrollable and not self.

## 5.4 Remarks about the Levels of Concentration of Consciousness when Mindful of Matter and Mind

**5.4.1** Please note that when I discuss **mindfulness of Matter**, I refer to **firm and neutral consciousness**, but when I discuss **mindfulness of Mind**, I refer to only **neutral consciousness**, without stressing that it must be firm so that my fellow practitioners will notice the difference between the concentration levels of mindfulness of Matter and mindfulness of Mind. However, there is one type of Mind, i.e. feeling that requires higher concentration than other kinds of Mind, particularly bodily feeling, i.e. bodily pleasure or pain, because it is rough and fixedly attached to the body. If the mind is not concentrated enough, it may be distracted when the physical feeling is intense. Therefore, contemplation of feeling (*vedanānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*) is also suitable for a meditation practitioner (*samatha-yanikā*), like contemplation of the body (*kāyānupassanā satipaṭṭhāna*).

In any event, the term "**firm consciousness**" for contemplation of the body and contemplation of feeling does not mean that consciousness must be so steadfast that it gets stiff because stiff consciousness is immoral. It only means that one should be mindful of the existence of consciousness, which is separate from Matter and feeling.

**5.4.2** **I used to doubt it for over a decade** that when one-pointed consciousness was firm and separate from an object of consciousness, one should focus one's attention on the consciousness or on the object of consciousness being known. In fact, the focus is neither a knower nor a known thing. We simply rely on mindfulness of the separate existence of a knower so that we will comprehend that the body and feeling, including other objects of consciousness, are only something known; they are not animals, human beings, ourselves or others. If one intently turns to look at or gaze at the knower itself, the knower will change its status from a knower to a known thing, and a new knower will appear somewhere deeper

than before. Thus, although one-pointed consciousness may be present, one should strictly refrain from gazing at it.

5.4.3 **Firm and knowing consciousness is advantageous**. It will be impassively mindful of objects of consciousness over a long period of time. It will see that objects of consciousness alternately appear and vanish all the time. However, it also has a disadvantage. We may misunderstand that knowing consciousness is permanent. This is because during the time that objects of consciousness alternately arise and vanish, knowing consciousness, which has been strengthened through meditation, seems to be permanent as it remains concentrated for a long time. As a matter of fact, knowing consciousness also arises and vanishes. Knowing consciousness of the same type arise and vanish continuously, innumerably and so rapidly that one who does not know how to notice it may misunderstand that it is permanent. Actually, firm and knowing consciousness is not one and the same consciousness that exists for a long time, but is a continuous flow of recurring consciousness of the same type.

5.4.4 **Development of mindfulness and insight** with the presence of knowing consciousness can be practiced up to the stage of Non-returners (*Anāgāmī*); and at the stage of development of mindfulness and insight on the path of Holiness (*arahatta-magga*), the knower is still firm and eminent. At this point, consciousness will be dispassionate towards other objects of consciousness, but will pay all attention to knowing consciousness because it is so marvelously pure and tranquil. It is so until mindfulness and clear comprehension are really perfected. At that moment, it will penetrate the Three Characteristics of Existence with deep mental impression and will relinquish attachment to consciousness. That is the end of study in Buddhism. After that, a new type of consciousness referred to as **functional consciousness** will arise. It is not concentrated and eminent as knowing consciousness anymore, but permeates through the whole world and the universe. Functional consciousness feels a touch of tranquility that is prevalent all over the world and the universe.

5.4.5 **For insight development through mindfulness of Mind**, particularly consciousness (*nāma-citta*), I did not stress that consciousness must be firm; I only mentioned that it must be neutral. As a matter of fact, however, consciousness of Mind must also be firm, but only momentarily before it vanishes. It need not be firm for long because a mental factor such as greed, anger, delusion exists for a very short period. It arises and vanishes continuously for only 7 consciousness-moments

(*citta-kkhaṇa*). Therefore, an insight practitioner applying Mind (except feeling) as an object of consciousness can practice mindfulness of Mind directly without having to practice absorption (*jhāna*) for knowing consciousness or one-pointed consciousness first. On the other hand, I do not mean that one must practice mindfulness of an object of consciousness continuously without tranquilization at all. If possible, one should practice meditation from time to time for a rest. After regaining strength, one should comfortably resume mindfulness of changes of *dhammārammana* or mind-objects. If after mindful of an object of consciousness, consciousness has any reaction to that object, mindfulness should be able to recollect the reaction automatically. Then, it will perceive the Three Characteristics of both Mind and all mind-objects.

## 5.5 Results of Training in Wisdom through Insight Development (*vipassanā*)

The last subject that will be described in this Chapter is what will result from the study of Matter and Mind. In short, we will get benefits in terms of both insight and refined happiness almost all along the path. And after finishing the study, we will, still being alive, attain the ultimate benefit, namely, realization of *Nibbāna*, which is sublimely tranquil.

### 5.5.1 Separation of Matter and Mind

When consciousness is firm and neutral in mindfulness of Matter and Mind and is automatically mindful, what is called "**a self**" will dissipate to show what it actually is, i.e. Matter and Mind. If mindfulness and wisdom mature, insight will further dissipate Mind into feeling, perception, mental formation and consciousness. It will also dissipate Matter into eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body or into earth, water, fire and air elements. The dissipation of Matter and Mind through insight is the beginning of disillusionment of the wrong view of an abiding "**self**". This is preliminary insight gained through training in wisdom.

### 5.5.2 Seeing the rising and falling/changing of Matter and Mind

After Matter and Mind dissipate, we will realize that each Matter and each Mind perform their own functions, including rising, falling and changing at all times. For example, consciousness will see Matter inhaling and exhaling, sitting and standing, standing and walking, moving and holding still, etc. Alternatively, consciousness will see that mindlessness arises

and vanishes, there is little space in between, and then new consciousness arises to recollect that it was mindless just now. All these lead to insight of the rising, falling and changing of Matter and Mind. It is the beginning point of disillusionment of the wrong view of Matter and Mind as an animal, a human being, a self; and liberation from clinging to Matter and Mind will follow.

### 5.5.3 Disenchantment and discernment of the truth of unsubstantial nature, suffering and harm from Mind and Matter

After more and more seeing of the rising and falling of Matter and Mind, some may be disenchanted with all conditioned states because they have realized that happiness arises and then vanishes. It is not pleasurable. Suffering arises and vanishes. It is not miserable. Moral consciousness arises and vanishes. It is not pleasant. Immoral consciousness arises and vanishes. It is not unpleasant. Whatever arises will vanish. It is neither pleasant nor unpleasant. Joy and grief are equally boring. Good and evil are equally boring. Some may view Matter and Mind as some natural phenomena of existence that are not self. Their selves are gone. A void, dread or the truth of unsubstantial nature may come to mind. These are feelings of insight practitioners. Some may get stuck at this stage for a long time while others may not take a long time to pass through this stage.

### 5.5.4 Neutrality to conditioned states

After more and more mindfulness of Matter and Mind, consciousness will realize that boredom, dreadfulness or any other feeling whatsoever is only an object of conscious that passes by. Consciousness will become firm and neutral to all conditioned states despite no will to maintain neutrality. This is a very important step of insight development. One who practices mindfulness up to this stage will be very blissful and will feel unshaken when touched by worldly vicissitudes. However, neutrality at this stage is still uncertain. Some may not be able to sustain it and become biased again while others may unexpectedly progress by leaps and bounds in *Dhamma*.

### 5.5.5 Attainment of the Eye of Truth (Suchness)

When consciousness is neutral to all conditioned states and mindfulness and wisdom are culminated, it will progress by leaps and bounds in *Dhamma*, i.e. attaining the Eye of Truth. Consciousness will automatically attain full concentration (*appanā-*

*samādhi*) and an insight-examination process that takes seven consciousness-moments will take place. The term "attainment of the Eye of Truth" means that consciousness admits and realizes the truth that by nature body and mind are impermanent, suffering and not-self. This body and this mind, once arisen, will naturally vanish. One who admits to heart and realizes this ultimate truth will feel like a child who has gone astray and found his parents. Consciousness will take warm and firm refuge in the Triple Gem, like a man in the middle of an ocean or a man lost in a jungle who knows the direction to the coast or finds the way out of the jungle. One will have a firm conviction that one day one will surely get to the coast or come out of the jungle. Although sometimes consciousness may be swayed by worldly phenomena or defilements, it still has a stronghold, which prevents it from evils and misconduct when overcome by defilements and craving. The merit of attaining the Eye of Truth is that it is regarded as a wholesome immediacy. The Stream-Winner (*Sotāpanna*) is perpetually safe from rebirth in lower worlds. It is beneficial both in the present and in the future. It is a great benefit resulting from training in wisdom. So great is the attainment that the Buddha declared it to be of a greater value than being a universal monarch.

### 5.5.6 Comprehension of the latter part of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)

After training in wisdom has gradually progressed, consciousness will eventually discern the truths in the latter part of the Dependent Origination and more often, in the direct order from "Dependent on Mind and Matter arises the Sense-Bases; Dependent on the Sense-Bases arises Contact; Dependent on the Contact arises Feeling, Dependent on Feeling arises Craving; Dependent on Craving arises Clinging; Dependent on the Clinging arises Becoming; Dependent on Becoming arises Birth; and Dependent on the Birth arises Suffering."

It is insight into the truth that this Matter and Mind exist only momentarily. The presence of Matter and Mind causes the existence of eyes, ears, a nose, a tongue, a body and mind, which are sense-organs. If there is only Matter or only Mind, the eyes, ears, nose, tongue and body cannot perform their functions. Both Matter and Mind must co-exist so that the sense-organs will be able to function. As for consciousness, it is Mind that can function even without Matter. When the eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind contact sense-objects through the six sense-doors, pleasure, suffering or indifference arises. Then, sensual craving, craving for existence or craving for non-existence will arise. When a craving arises,

consciousness will cling to the sense-object and a mental process will take place, thereby oppressing consciousness, which is misperceived as a self. As the result, tension or suffering arises.

One who has undergone wisdom training to this stage will begin to realize the truth that if consciousness is unwavering and devoid of craving and clinging, it will not suffer. On the other hand, if it wavers with craving and clinging, it will suffer. Consequently, consciousness will be doubtless and will not seek external objects of consciousness. There is no wavering even internally with the view to seek *kāmadhamma* or to think about sensual pleasure. Consciousness will be automatically firm and eminent. It will simply act as a knower or an observer, not a seeker of sensuality. Rough suffering will cease permanently. Consciousness will be so tranquil and blissful in itself that some may be content with attainment at this level. They may not want to study Matter and Mind anymore because training is burdensome to consciousness as well.

After practicing insight development to this stage, consciousness be very joyful within itself and without having to rely on external sensual pleasure. The existence of this joy is beyond imagination of most human beings. The joyful feeling after renunciation of sensual craving is so overwhelmed that it can permeate through the body to every hair end. It is like a shower with refreshingly cold water during hot weather.

### 5.5.7 Comprehension of the first part of Dependent Origination (*paṭiccasamuppāda*)

After development of insight to the stage enumerated in Clause 5.5.6, the mind will limit the scope of learning to knowing consciousness. It will comprehend that knowing consciousness is firm and pleasurable, but not a self. Nor does it belong to one. Through further insight development, consciousness will subsequently gain intuitive insight into the first part of Dependent Origination, but will clearly comprehend it in reverse order or the Dependent Extinction. It will realize that with clear comprehension of the four Noble Truths, striving and conditioning will not arise. As conditioning does not arise, consciousness will not bear Mind and Matter. As consciousness does not bear Mind and Matter, Mind and Matter will not emerge or will not be grasped at to burden and oppress the mind anymore.

This is to explain that previously, consciousness felt that the knower was a good and miraculous thing, and took it as a

secure refuge. However, when wisdom through insight development is culminated, keen insight into the Noble Truths will flash forth. It will realize that the five Aggregates, including knowing consciousness, are impermanent, unsatisfactory and not-self (Insight into the Three Characteristics of Existence flashes forth from comprehension of only one of the characteristics, and the mind will relinquish attachment to consciousness). After realizing the truth, striving to condition a natural phenomenon against the law of nature, i.e. striving to make the Aggregates happy and a self will cease. Consciousness will no longer hold to Mind and Matter nor grasp at them to burden and oppress consciousness any more. Nor will Mind and Matter be formed in a new process of becoming (*bhava*).

After developing insight to the point that the mind penetrates the Noble Truths with clear comprehension of suffering, consciousness will relinquish abandon the Aggregates. It will be detached from the Aggregates and liberated from cankers (*āsava*) that confine and conceal consciousness, like a chick forcing a way out of the eggshell. That is the end of study in Buddhism. Rebirth and existence have ceased. Fulfilled is the holy life. The remaining lifetime is totally miraculous because the Aggregates still perform their functions, but consciousness is independent of the Aggregates. There is no more oppression on consciousness. Although it continues to perform various functions, i.e. perception and mental formation, it feels like doing nothing. Every function is purely an action. Consciousness penetrates bliss that is far beyond thought and imagination. It is extreme happiness that is free, transparent, light, clean and clear, boundless, more spacious than the sky and air and more blissful that the most blissful. This type of consciousness is what the Higher Doctrine (*Adhidhamma*) refers to as "functional consciousness". Ajahn Mun referred to it as, "persisting *citta*" ("*thiticitta*"). Luang Pu Dun[6] referred to it as "one *citta*". Luang Pu Thate referred to it as "heart". Ajahn Buddhadasa referred to as the "Essence of Mind", and Luang Pu Budda referred to it as the "single *citta*". The reason is that it will forever be one and never be two again. Never again will it be deluded with dualistic perception, such as joy/suffering, good/evil, etc.

### 5.5.8 Realization of Nibbāna

Once consciousness is liberated from cankers, which have confined it, and is independent, "one *citta*" will realize *Nibbāna*,

[6] Luang Pu Dun Atulo (Phra Rajavudhacariya Atulo)

which is "One *Dhamma*". *Nibbāna* is a condition that is pure, clean and clear, immaculate, empty, formless, boundless, luminous, sublimely blissful and immortal. The consciousness that penetrates *Nibbāna* will be overwhelmed with extreme happiness. To compare sensual pleasure and tranquility from absorptions (*jhāna*) with the bliss from realization of *Nibbāna*, the distinguishable characteristics are that the sensual pleasure with which human beings are familiar is a kind confined to consciousness at the chest and tranquility from absorptions is pleasant and permeating through every pore; whereas that tranquility of *Nibbāna* is overwhelming to the sky and air and boundless. No molecule can escape the permeation of that feeling.

The bliss from realization of *Nibbāna* is attained through several approaches. Common to all noble individuals is penetration of *Nibbāna* at the moment of realizing the path and the fruition (*ariya-magga and ariya-phala*), but it happens for a very short time. Consciousness belonging to the path (*ariya-magga*) at each level exists for only one consciousness-moment and consciousness belonging to the fruition (*ariya-phala*) exists only for a few consciousness-moments. In addition, consciousness will be able to fully penetrate *Nibbāna* only by consciousness belonging to the fruition (*phala-citta*) because there is no further task to be accomplished. Consciousness belonging to the path (*magga-citta*) is supermundane resultant consciousness (*lokuttara vipāka citta*). During the moment of enlightenment that consciousness belonging to the path (*magga-citta*) flashes, consciousness must perform the function of eradicating subtle defilements. Thus, consciousness belonging to the path (*magga-citta*) is supermundane moral consciousness (*lokuttara kusala citta*) that still has a task to accomplish. It is not idle to fully permeate and appreciate the tranquility of *Nibbāna* as it does during the moments of consciousness belonging to fruition (*phala-citta*).

There are some other approaches to realization of *Nibbāna* that are common to general noble individuals, i.e. attainment of fruition (*phalasamāpatti*). Attainment of fruition is supermundane attainment (*lokuttara-samāpatti*), i.e. attainment concentration (*appanā-samādhi*) on *Nibbāna* as an object of consciousness, causing consciousness belonging to fruition (*phala-citta*) to recur for innumerable times, not only a few times as at the moments of attainment to fruition (*ariya-phala*) at each stage.

Attainment of fruition requires two constituents, namely:

(1) Consciousness with full concentration (*appanā-samādhi*); and
(2) *Nibbāna* as an object of consciousness.

Hence, worldlings cannot attain fruition despite skills in full concentration practice because they have never realized it before. For noble ones, although they may not have practiced full concentration before, they will somehow be able to attain it because at the moments of attaining the path and the fruition, consciousness automatically reaches full concentration in one of the absorptions (*jhāna*). Thus, it will not be too difficult for a noble one to attain that absorption again later because consciousness has experienced it before.

In any event, this does not mean that all nobles are equally skillful in the attainment of fruition because to attain fruition the object of consciousness is *Nibbāna.* Nobles at lower levels have penetrated it for only a few moments; and thus their attainment of fruition is more difficult than that of nobles at higher levels. Usually, they will have to begin from mindfulness of Matter and Mind until consciousness abandons Matter and Mind and penetrates *Nibbāna*; whereas nobles at higher levels who are more acquainted with *Nibbāna* can attain *Nibbāna* at once by reflection (*manasikāra*). However, another important point is that the nobles who review *Nibbāna* so often that they have acquired mastery in retrospection (*paccavekkhaṇa-vasī*) of *Nibbāna*, will be able to attain it clearly and immediately upon reflection. These nobles can attain fruition more proficiently than those who hardly review *Nibbāna*.

The process of attainment of fruition for a noble without skills in the attainment of *Nibbāna* starts from mindfulness of Matter and Mind, and for a skillful noble person, from reflection on it. At one point of time, consciousness will reach full concentration from the 1st absorption and above. Then, conforming consciousness (*anuloma-citta*) will arise to end consciousness of a supramundane object, i.e. Matter and Mind. Conforming consciousness (*anuloma-citta*) will recur for 3 consciousness-moments for a quickly enlightened one and 4 consciousness-moments for a slowly enlightened one. After that, consciousness belonging to fruition (*phala-citta*) will recur innumerable times until it is time to retreat from the attainment. Then, life-continuum consciousness (*bhavanga-citta*) will arise to disrupt the process of attainment of fruition. That is a retreat from attainment of fruition.

With regard to *Nibbāna* after segregation of the Aggregates, it is a matter that is out of the question and unimaginable by worldlings. Anytime they think about it, they are quite extreme in their convictions of either eternalism (*sassata-diṭṭhi*), i.e. the vision that the Aggregates still exist after attainment of *Nibbāna,*

or annihilationism (*uccheda-diṭṭhi*), i.e. vision that everything will vanish after attainment of *Nibbāna*. For this reason, I will not mention it in this Article to avoid a debate on theoretical philosophy.

### 5.5.9 Living like a lotus untainted by water.

As a matter of fact, consciousness of human beings and animals sneaks out to cling to an object of consciousness at all times, like timber immersed in water. As the result, consciousness is ignorantly shaken and biased by the object of consciousness. Only through the study of the Doctrines of Buddhism is mindfulness of conditions developed. It will feel that an object of consciousness is one thing and consciousness is something else. It likes seeing that the body, feeling and perception (mental formation) perform their functions with greed, anger and ignorance while another kind of nature is present, seeing the changing of those natural phenomena. It will realize that sometimes the knowing nature is separate from the known object; sometimes the knowing nature flows into and blends with the known object. After studying to this level, some may doubt whether they should be mindful of the object of consciousness that exists in the middle of the chest as a small mass or a big mass, sometimes heavy, sometimes light, sometimes happy, sometimes sad, sometimes good, sometimes evil, or whether they should be mindful of knowing consciousness that seems to be floating at head level. Concerning this issue, please note that when it is mindful of anything, just observe it. Do not intentionally be mindful of either of the two because our aim is not to achieve anything at all.

With keener insight through steady practice, consciousness will realize that it is attached to and oppressed all the time, causing endless suffering.

Through further practice to the effect that mindfulness automatically recollects natural phenomena, consciousness will realize that right at the moment of waking up, the first job that it does is grasping at the mind with the view to study and consider it and that consciousness is oppressed at all times. It will discover that it easily and readily grasps at the mind, but does not know how to abandon it.

After developing insight to perfection, i.e. getting intuitive knowledge of the Three Characteristics of consciousness, the mind has penetrated the Truth of Suffering because consciousness is the last suffering to abandon. Then, it will

realize that it abandons the mass of suffering in the middle of the chest and simultaneously relinquish the knowing nature that is present above. To this point, the mind becomes independent because it clings to nothing at all. It will penetrate the bliss of *Nibbāna* and complete the study of Buddhism at this point. That is the perfection of clear insight into the Noble Paths.

After finishing the study of Buddhism with the keenest insight into the Noble Paths, the remaining life in this world will resemble that of a lotus untainted by water. The eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body and mind will function exactly in the same ways as those of human beings and animals in bewaring of sense-objects at the six sense-organs, but sense-objects will only be something moving in empty space. Nothing will ever contact these objects, which would cause mental suffering again, because consciousness that bears suffering has already been abandoned.

### 5.5.10End of Suffering

After having completed the Three Studies, consciousness will be liberated from the whole mass of suffering, i.e. from the Aggregates, but the Aggregates are still impermanent, suffering and not-self as always. Thus, bodily pain still arises, but mental suffering is forever gone. No matter how happy consciousness is, the mind will not cling to it. It will live with such happiness like a lotus untainted by water, as aforesaid. At this point, death is not favorable, but being alive is not pleasurable either. Simply live a life in peace, like a worker who sits leisurely after finishing his work and waits for his wages, namely, *anupādisesa-nibbāna* or extinction of the Aggregates that constitute a whole mass of suffering.

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